Therefore, that is the process which is going on. We have waited for a couple of years and then we have ratified and deposited it. The ratification was done earlier in 1995, but we have deposited it now. There is no urgency that way. But urgency is there because the 'entry into force' clause is operational.

So far as NAM countries are concerned, we have always been in touch with them. So far as the weapons of mass destruction are concerned, India and all Non-Aligned countries have a similar point of view that all these weapons should be destroyed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Completion of Irrigation Projects

*305. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the steps proposed to be taken by the Union Government to complete the ongoing major and medium irrigation projects and to institutionalise the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme;

(b) whether the Union Government have prepared concrete plans to develop the water resources for irrigation and flood control etc; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, and the nature of assistance proposed to be provided to the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) to (c) The Union Government has been impressing upon State Governments to take a number of steps namely, attaching top most priority to projects which are in advanced stage of completion, ear-marking of outlays for important projects, monitoring of projects at State and Central level, providing more outlays for major and medium irrigation sector and adopting sub-project approach for large projects.

Irrigation and Flood Control are state subjects and projects are investigated, formulated and implemented by the State Governments. The Central Plan Assistance is released in the form of 'Block Grant' not tied to any sector of development or project. However, the Union Government has launched Accelerated Irrigation benefits Programme (AIBP) with a budget provison of Rs. 900 crores (revised to Rs. 500 crores) during the current financial year 1996-97 to provide Central Loan Assistance on matching basis to the States for accelerating implementation of major and medium irrigation projects. The programme is being continued during 1997-98 with a proposed budget provision of Rs. 1300 crores. Union Government has also taken up Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for extending loan assistance to minor, medium and major irrigation projects through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

The Union Government has also taken a number of steps to deal with problems of flood namely, setting up of National Commission on Floods (1976-1980), establishing Ganga Flood Control Commission (GFCC) for Ganga basin, setting up of Brahmaputra Board, Flood forecasting by Central Water Commission and preparation of a model flood plain zoning Bill. In addition, Central assistance for flood proofing and maintenance of flood protection works of Kosi and Gandak projects, and Central Loan Assistance to Assam are provided. GFCC has prepared comprehensive plan for flood control for subbasins of the Ganga basin. Brahmaputra Board is engaged in preparation of the Master Plan for flood control of the main stem of Brahmaputra, the Barrak system and the tributaries of the Brahmaputra.

Modernisation of Shipping

*306. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have chalked out a plan for expansion, modernisation and improvement of efficiency of shipping operations, if the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) the steps taken so far or proposed to be taken in this regard;

(c) whether ship building and repair services in various shipyards in the country are satisfactory, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to strengthen and modernise the Cochin Shipyard?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, The Government has taken various steps to simplify and libralise the ship acquisition procedures to facilitate acquisition of modern and efficient ships. As a result 8th plan target of reaching 7 Million Gross Registered has already been achieved.

(c) and (d) Indian shipyards have an installed shipbuilding capacity of 2.8 lakh (approx.) Dead-Weight Tonnes and the shiprepair capacity of 3850 drydock days per annum. Modernisation and upgradation of the Public sector shipyards is a continuous process which is taken up through the Plan Schemes. For Cochin Shipyard Limited a sum of Rs. 111.14 crores has been proposed for this purpose for the 9th Five Year Plan.